



CITY OF TUCSON

MEDIA RELEASE

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STEEL FRAME RAISING CELEBRATION SET FOR THE MARTIN LUTHER KING APARTMENTS AT DEPOT PLAZA

Construction crews began assembling the steel frame for the vertical construction for the new 6-story Martin Luther King Apartment Building at Depot Plaza. This mixed-use project site at North 5th Avenue and East Congress Street has been under development since July 2007, when the City and Rio Nuevo broke ground on the 285-stall subterranean parking garage that will serve as the building platform for the new apartments.

A steel raising celebration is planned for Wednesday, October 21, 2009, at 8:30 a.m. on top of the Pennington Street Garage, on Pennington Street, between Scott and 6th Avenues.

This 68-unit public housing building for seniors and persons with disabilities residents is a key milestone in the City's third HOPE VI Project. Tucson successfully revitalized the South Park Neighborhood and Barrio Santa Rosa with HOPE VI awards. The 2004 City of Tucson HOPE VI Martin Luther King Revitalization Plan received \$9.85 million in a national competition funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. An additional \$60 million from other public and private sources is expected to be leveraged to complete all six phases of the Plan. This mixed-use, transit-oriented development will contain market rate and affordable housing, ground-floor retail, a public plaza, and streetscape improvements adjacent to the modern street car line on east Congress. The total project cost is \$23 million.

The new MLK building will include all handicapped accessible one-bedroom units ranging from 628 to 780 square feet, each with a private outdoor balcony. The common area includes a computer lab/library and a rooftop community space, as well as a controlled-access lobby. These amenities are designed to promote maximum independent living and community-based activities for the elderly and disabled residents. Upon completion, the City hopes to fulfill the project's Silver designation under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards established by the U.S. Green Building Council; which is the third highest level that can be achieved for green building.

Through the HOPE VI program the City has partnered with a host of non-profit organizations that provide activities and support to public housing residents. This includes onsite medical services, educational programs, social events, transportation, and physical activity.

This new MLK building replaces 68 of the 96 public units that were taken out of service when the (adjacent) old MLK building was sold to the private sector and converted into market rate apartments, now known as One North Fifth. The City has already constructed 28 replacement public housing units in a mixed-income subdivision near N. Silverbell Rd. and W. Goret Rd., northwest of downtown.

The new MLK Apartment building will be under construction for approximately one year. Residents will begin to occupy the building in late 2010. Nelsen Partners Architects and Lloyd Construction are the team hired to complete the new building with the City.

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